Gujarat during October, 2000 to March, 2001 come across a stretch of formations typical of a riverine regime in the middle of the sea at 30-40 m water depth. An area of almost 9 km. stretch west of Hazira in Gujarat appeared to be lined with well laid house basement like features partially covered by sand waves and sand ripples. The Side Scan Sonar deployed for the survey picked up images which indicate several geometric objects that are normally man made.

During subsequent surveys in November-December, 2001 various objects were picked up from the sea bed. Among the objects collected, the carbonised wood pieces were taken up for dating using C14 technique in the Birbal Sahni Institute of Palaeo Botany, Lucknow and in National Geophysical Research Institute, Hyderabad. The preliminary results reveal that the age of the wood samples dates back to 7500 B.C.

These results and some of the objects collected were made public in a Press Conference on 16th January, 2002. Further detailed surveys, studies & investigations would need to be done in the area by multi-disciplinary, multi-institutional teams to conclusively establish the period of settlement.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) According to Archaeological Survey of India, the information available is not adequate to declare the site as a National Monument.

Kotapalli-Narsapur Rail Line

3435. DR. DASARINARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the present status of Kotapalli-Narsapur new rail line project, selected for implementation in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) by when it is likely to be completed; and

(c) the funds earmarked for this project during the current financial year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJ AC-OPAL): (a) and (b)The Final Location Survey for new BG rail line between Kotapalli-Narsapur is in progress and has been completed between Kotapalli-Amalapuram including geo-technical investigations for Gowthami bridge. This would be followed by land acquisition and work would be taken up once the land becomes available and the detailed estimate is sanctioned. No target date for completion has yet been fixed.

(c) An outlay of Rs. 8 crore has been proposed for the work in Budget 2002-2003.